



Community Organization Op Ed

With the arrival of the Labor Day holiday, Americans are preparing for end of summer travel and celebration with family and friends. Unfortunately, holidays are a dangerous time on our nation's roads because of impaired driving. In 2002, 55% of fatalities from motor vehicle crashes during the Labor Day weekend were alcohol-related. As a community leader with [insert your group name here], it is important to remind neighbors and friends to drive safely this holiday weekend. We encourage you to help spread the message about the risks of impaired driving

Last year, more than 43,000 Americans were killed and another three million injured in motor vehicle crashes. More than 40% of those deaths came from alcohol-related crashes, according to National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. This translates to more than 17,000 fatalities, enough to fill up a large-sized sports arena [or name the local sports arena in your area such as the MCI Center]. Furthermore, the vast majority of these deaths - 12,000 of them - occurred in crashes that involved at least one person who had a blood alcohol content of at least .08 percent, the legal driving limit in all states in the country

Though we have made progress, many drivers still don't get the message: *You Drink & You Drive. You Lose.* What will it take for all Americans to understand the dangers of driving while impaired?

When will we wake up and stop the carnage on our highways? Will it take the loss of a child, spouse or neighbor to convince each and every one of us that impaired driving is a scourge that maims and kills thousands every month?

The threat to our families is great. Impaired driving is one of the most frequently committed violent crimes in America. Every 30 minutes, someone dies in an alcohol-related crash. But there is something we can all do about this. With high-visibility enforcement crackdowns, we make it clear that impaired driving is a serious and violent crime. With support from the media, emphasizing the *You Drink & Drive. You Lose.* message, we can convince impaired drivers: if you drink and drive irresponsibly, you will be caught.

This is a call to action for the citizens of [metropolitan area, city or state]. Law enforcement agencies across [your county] and the country will be out in force this Labor Day to deter impaired driving, but they need your help. You can help deter this crime by reminding family and friends to drive safely and to always buckle up. Plan ahead if you will be drinking. Use a designated sober driver or take a taxi. With your help, fewer Americans will face tragedy during the holidays - or at any other time of year.

For more information about impaired driving, visit www.StopImpairedDriving.org



Physician-Nurse Op Ed

For many people Labor Day is a last chance at summer fun and relaxation. But for medical professionals who treat crash victims during the holiday because of the increase in impaired driving, it is a weekend full of pain and injury. In 2002, 55% of fatalities in motor vehicle crashes during the Labor day weekend were alcohol-related. As medical professionals with [group, hospital, or association] we know that the start of autumn will be brought to an abrupt halt for hundreds of Americans whose lives are touched by tragedy because of drunk driving.

For more than two decades, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) has been focusing on deaths and injuries caused by impaired driving - especially those incurred during high-risk periods such as the Labor Day holiday.

Last year, NHTSA reports that more than 43,000 Americans were killed and another three million injured in motor vehicle crashes - many during the holiday season. More than 17,000 of those deaths came from alcohol-related crashes. Furthermore, nearly 12,000 of these deaths occurred in crashes that involved at least one person with a blood alcohol content of .08 percent, the legal driving limit in every state in the country. Another area of growing concern is the increasing number of fatalities of motorcyclists in alcohol-related crashes. Impaired driving is one of the most

frequently committed violent crimes in America. Every 30 minutes someone dies in an alcohol-related crash.

Through the years, the nation has been looking at new approaches to reduce impaired driving and its devastating effects on innocent motorists and passengers. Though we have made tremendous progress in a number of areas, many drivers still don't get the message: *You Drink & Drive. You Lose.*

What will it take for Americans to understand the dangers of driving while impaired? When will we wake up and stop the carnage on our roads and highways? Are you convinced? Will it take the loss of your child, spouse or neighbor to convince you that impaired driving is a scourge that maims and kills thousands in our country every month?

We are all part of the solution. This is a call to action for all the citizens of [name of metropolitan area, city or state], and your support is urgently needed. As [nurses / doctors], we have seen the tragedy firsthand and we'll be reminding our patients to drive safely. We ask you to remind others to drive only when sober, or if you are drinking designate a sober driver and to always buckle up. With all of our help, we can get America moving in the right direction again.

To learn more about how you can prevent impaired driving, visit www.StopImpairedDriving.org



Sample Student Op Ed

While the arrival of the Labor Day holiday may bring thoughts of a new school year for classmates and teachers of young children; many teenagers and young adults have something else in mind - parties and barbeques where alcohol may be available.

We at [insert youth group name] know many of our peers don't realize that motor vehicle crashes - 40 percent of which involve alcohol - are the number one killer of Americans aged 4 to 34. Sadly, during the Labor Day holiday, the number of fatalities in alcohol-related motor vehicle crashes rises sharply to 55%. Unfortunately for many teenage Americans, the final blast of summer fun ends tragically by death or injury in roadway crashes.

For more than two decades, The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) has been focusing on deaths and injuries caused by impaired driving - especially those incurred during high-risk periods such as the Labor Day holiday weekend.

NHTSA reports that last year, more than 43,000 Americans were killed and another three million injured in motor vehicle crashes - many during the holi-

day season. More than 17,000 of those deaths came from crashes in which alcohol was involved. The vast majority of these deaths - nearly 12,000 - occurred in crashes that involved at least one person with a blood alcohol content of .08 percent, the legal driving limit in all states.

Through the years, impaired driving activists and student activists like [name your group] have been looking at new approaches to reduce impaired driving and its devastating effects on innocent motorists and passengers. Though we have made tremendous progress in a number of areas, many drivers of all ages still don't get the message: *You Drink & You Drive. You Lose.*

The threat to our own friends and family is great. Impaired driving is one of the most frequently committed violent crimes in America. Every 30 minutes, someone dies in an alcohol-related crash.

We are all part of the solution. This is a call to action for young people of [your community, city or State], and we urgently need your support. As young adults, we can use our influence to remind our peers to buckle up and refrain from driving while impaired.